

**Remarks at the Opening Ceremony  
on Saturday, September 30**

Thank you. We stand here before the small single engine planes that brave New Zealand pilots flew over the Antarctic ice. These planes and their courage remind us of the tremendous importance of the research our two countries have undertaken and the sacrifices they and many others have made to make that research possible.

From time immemorial, the Antarctic has been at the limit of human imagination, human courage, and human discovery. It has fascinated us and it has challenged us. For nearly 50 years now, Antarctica has been a showcase of international cooperation.

There on that remote frozen continent the Cold War and other disputes of geopolitics have remained distant as partners such as New Zealand and the United States have worked together to advance important matters of science in the fields from astrophysics, to human and animal biology, to climate science.

That cooperative effort has yielded benefits not just to New Zealand and the U.S. but to our friends the world over.

Tomorrow we will gather at the cathedral to pray for God's blessings and protection as we begin our fiftieth season. We also begin now to celebrate the 50 years of cooperation on the Ice and International Polar Year, and to commit ourselves anew to cooperate in Antarctica for the benefit of all.

I congratulate all those whose determination, genius and courage have brought us this far. Our hopes and prayers are with you as you lead us into the future of exploration and research.

Thank you.